



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## San Diego Public Library

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **THE READING PROMISE: My Father and the Books We Shared, a Memoir by Alice Ozma**

*A Must-Read Homage to the Joys and Rewards of Reading - and Being Read to*

**SAN DIEGO** – Adventures by the Book, Witkids, Pacific Beach Elementary School and the San Diego Public Library present a “Reading Promise Summer Reading Program” featuring Alice Ozma, author of the upcoming memoir, *A Reading Promise: My Father and the Books We Read*, on Thursday, June 9, 2011 at the Mission Valley Branch Library, Scripps Ranch Branch Library, and Pacific Beach Elementary School. *The Reading Promise* is the heartwarming, true story of a young woman whose single father, an elementary school librarian, read aloud to her every night, starting from when she was in 4<sup>th</sup> grade until the day she left for college, and the life lessons learned from the books he read to her. The book will be published on May 31, 2011. All events are FREE and open to the public. But, “Support Your Library Packages” are available for purchase, which include a signed book, a donation to the library, and some fun giveaway items.

When Alice Ozma was in fourth grade, she and her father decided to see if he could read aloud to her for one hundred consecutive nights. On the hundredth night, they shared pancakes to celebrate, but it soon became evident that neither wanted to let go of their reading ritual. So they decided to continue what they called “The Streak.” From Frank L. Baum to Dickens to J.K. Rowling to Shakespeare, Ozma's father read aloud to her every night without fail until the day she left for college.

In this deeply affecting memoir, Ozma tells the story of her relationship with the extraordinary man who raised her – from his steady hand on the back of her wobbly bike to his one-man crusade to keep reading in schools – through a series of deftly written, often hilarious vignettes about the words they shared and the spaces in between.

On Thursday, June 9, Ozma will make three appearances in San Diego to launch the book:

- Mission Valley Library (2123 Fenton Parkway), 10:30 – 11:30 a.m., for an event targeting preschool students and parents;
- Pacific Beach Elementary School (1234 Tourmaline St), 1:00-2:00 p.m., for an event targeting elementary and middle school students and parents;
- Scripps Ranch Library (10301 Scripps Lake Dr), 6:00-7:00 p.m., targeting working adults.

Parents and kids are encouraged to start a “Reading Streak” of their own by participating in the library’s “Reading Promise” contest during which adults and the children in their lives will read together for 100 consecutive days. Please visit the author’s website

[www.makeareadingpromise.com](http://www.makeareadingpromise.com) to find more information on some of the books the author and her father read and loved, organized by grade level. Finishers will receive a certificate of achievement signed by San Diego Public Library director, Deborah Barrow.

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Copies of the book will be available for purchase at all three sites. Books may also be purchased through a “Support Your Library Package” offer available through the Adventures by the Book website at [www.adventuresbythebook.com/library.html](http://www.adventuresbythebook.com/library.html). Only books purchased at the event venues or through the “Support Your Library package” will be signed by the author. All donations will go to the San Diego Public Library’s Children’s Program Fund.

*The Reading Promise* poignantly illustrates the unbreakable parent-child bond, the books they treasured, and the life lessons learned along the way. Last April, the *New York Times* published a widely read article about Ozma and her father. The article has inspired people across the country to start their own reading streaks.

*The Reading Promise* is also a battle cry emphasizing the importance of libraries for children and reading aloud to them. Recently, the elementary school where Ozma’s father worked decided to get rid of all the books in the library and replace them with computers, putting him out of a job. This is an unfortunate reality nationwide as libraries lose funding and are subject to budgetary constraints.

**Phenomenal Advance Praise for THE READING PROMISE:**

“Ozma has written a memoir as rich and revealing, witty and warm, confident and compassionate as works by people who may have been around a few more blocks, but who probably haven’t read as many books. Persuasive and influential, poignant and inspirational, Ozma’s exuberant paean to the joys and rewards of reading—and being read to—is a must-read treasure for parents, especially, and bibliophiles, certainly.”

**- *Booklist* (STARRED)**

“...[an] utterly charming memoir, which blends Ozma’s reading experience with a perfectly phrased account of her upbringing and shows us just how much she learned. Sweet, engaging, and obviously inspiring (it even ends with a “Reading Promise”), this is the perfect book to hand any curmudgeon who needs reminding that reading makes a difference or thinks that today’s youth are all blasé. Highly recommended.”

**- *Library Journal* (STARRED)**

“Ozma’s work is humorous, generous, and warmly felt, and with a terrific reading list included, there is no better argument for the benefits of reading to a child than this rich, imaginative work.”

**- *Publishers Weekly***

“A warm memoir and a gentle nudge to parents about the importance of books, quality time and reading to children.”

**- *Kirkus***

**Adventures by the Book** offers worldwide opportunities for readers to connect with authors and their books on an intimate basis through unique, interesting, and adventurous travels and events. Please visit them at [www.adventuresbythebook.com](http://www.adventuresbythebook.com) for more information.

**WitKids’** mission is to inspire, educate, and empower children of all ages to take leadership roles and commit to improving their school, community and the world. For more information, please visit them at [www.witkids.org](http://www.witkids.org).

Learn about other events at the San Diego Public Library’s Central Library and 35 branches, find links to numerous additional resources, or search for materials in the Library’s catalog online at [www.sandiegolibrary.org](http://www.sandiegolibrary.org).